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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
ACDA-12 TRSE-00 MCT-02 SY-05 USSS-00 AID-05
COME-00 A-01 /091 W
----------121858 290825Z /21
R 281255Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5538
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO

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BRUSSELS ALSO FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N.A.
TAGS: PINS, SP
SUBJECT: THE JULY 21 ASSASSINATIONS: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

REFS: 1. MADRID 8408, 2. MADRID 8388, 3. MADRID 8332

1. SUMMARY: RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE JULY 21 ASSASSINATIONS REMAINS UNCLEAR, AND THE PRESS IS EVEN SPECULATING THAT THEY COULD HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT BY AN ETA-GRAPO TANDEM. END SUMMARY.

2. FOR THE RECORD, THE IDENTITY OF THE ASSASSINATION SQUAD THAT MURDERED GENERAL SANCHEZ RAMOS-IZQUIERDO
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AND LT. COL. PEREZ RODRIGUEZ ON JULY 21 REMAINS UNCLEAR. THIS CONFUSION RESULTS FROM THE FACT THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ASSASSINATIONS HAS BEEN CLAIMED FOR TWO TERRORIST GROUPS, AND IT HAS BEEN HEIGHTENED BY WITNESSES' IDENTIFICATION OF TERRORISTS BELONGING TO YET A THIRD ORGANIZATION AMONG THE ASSASSINATION SQUAD.

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-- ON JULY 21, A CALLER IDENTIFYING HIMSELF AS A MEMBER OF THE HERETOFORE UNKNOWN "GRUPOS ARMADOS PROLETARIOS" (GAP) CLAIMED IN A PHONE CONVERSATION WITH MADRID'S "DIARIO 16" THAT HIS GROUP WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KILLINGS.

-- ON JULY 22, THE BASQUE TERRORIST ETA CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ATTACK IN A COMMUNIQUE TRANSMITTED TO A BILBAO RADIO STATION. THE POLICE REPORTEDLY BELIEVE THE COMMUNIQUE IS AUTHENTIC, BUT, IN AN UNUSUAL MOVE, THEY HAVE NOT PUBLISHED THE TEXT OF THE DOCUMENT, THEREBY FURTHER CONFUSING THE ISSUE.

-- MEANWHILE, WITNESSES TO THE ASSASSINATIONS AND A WATCHMAN AT A CONSTRUCTION SITE OUTSIDE OF MADRID WHO WAS ACCOSTED BY WHAT APPARENTLY WERE THE THREE MEMBERS OF THE ASSASSINATION SQUAD (WHO TREATED THE WOUNDS OF ONE OF THEIR NUMBER IN THE WATCHMAN'S SHACK) HAVE IDENTIFIED PHOTOGRAPHS OF KNOWN MEMBERS OF THE SHADOWY, ULTRA-LEFT GRAPO. THESE PRESS REVELATIONS WERE FOLLOWED ON JULY 24, HOWEVER, BY A GRAPO COMMUNIQUE TO MADRID'S "INFORMACIONES" DENYING RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE KILLINGS.

2. THE MANHUNT FOR THE TERRORISTS CONTINUES, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOW FEARED THAT THEY HAVE MADE THEIR WAY OUT OF
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THE POLICE RING AROUND MADRID OR ARE WELL HIDDEN WITHIN THE CITY. THE GAP CLAIM OF RESPONSIBILITY APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DISCARDED BY THE POLICE, AND THERE IS NOW PRESS SPECULATION, GENERATED BY THE COMBINATION OF THE ETA CLAIM AND THE GRAPO IDENTIFICATIONS, OF SOME SORT OF OPERATIONAL LINKAGE BETWEEN THE TWO ORGANIZATIONS. ONE LINE OF SPECULATION RUNS THAT ETA MAY HAVE CARRIED OUT THE ASSASSINATIONS, WHILE THE GRAPO MEMBERS WHO HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED WERE ACTUALLY A DECOY TEAM TO THROW THE POLICE OFF THE SCENT. AT ANY RATE, THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY REMAINS UNCLEAR. TODMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ASSASSINATION, MILITARY PERSONNEL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MADRID08696
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780311-0827
Format: TEL
From: MADRID
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780710/aaaaaiad.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9435c06a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MADRID 8408, 78 MADRID 8388, 78 MADRID 8332
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1844465
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE JULY 21 ASSASSINATIONS: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?
TAGS: PINS, SP, (RAMOS-IZQUIERDO, SANCHEZ), (RODRIGUEZ, PEREZ)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9435c06a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014